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- ART. I.—1. *Petits Traités publiés par l'Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques.*—1. *De la Propriété d'après le Code Civil.* Par M. TROPLONG.—2. *Du Droit de Propriété.* Par M. THIERS.—3. *Des Associations Ouvrières.* Par M. VILLERMÉ.—4. *De la Providence.* Par M. DAMIRON.—5. *Philosophie Populaire.* Par VICTOR COUSIN. *Suivie de la Première Partie de la Profession de Foi du Vicaire Savoyard, sur la Morale et la Religion Naturelle.*—6. *Enseignement et Sort des Ouvriers et de l'Industrie, avant, pendant, et après 1848.* Par M. CHARLES DUPIN. Paris. 1848–9.
2. *History of the Constituent Assembly of France, from May, 1848.* By J. F. CORKRAN, Esq. New York. Harpers. 12mo. pp. 377.

THESE little treatises are very curious and important, not so much from their intrinsic merits, though some of them are written with great ability, as from the occasion that called them forth, and the character and standing of the persons by whom they are prepared. Shortly after the terrible Paris insurrection of June, 1848,* that branch of the French Insti-

* We must be particular in dates, for Paris insurrections and revolutions recur so frequently nowadays that, without careful specification, one cannot be distinguished from another. They happen about as often as thunder storms in the tropics, the atmosphere being constantly charged with the electricity that produces them. Already we need a compendious history of France, and indeed of all Continental Europe, during the last twenty months, to answer merely as a dictionary of names and dates; for no memory is retentive enough to preserve such a crowd of important events, and a file of newspapers is an awkward and tedious resource.

tute which is called the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences undertook, at the request of the Cavaignac government, to prepare a series of tracts, which should be published in great numbers and sold at a very low price, in order to enlighten the common people upon the fundamental principles of politics, political economy, morals, and religion, and thereby, if possible, to prevent them from continuing a mad and destructive crusade against all the institutions of modern civilization. The pen was invoked in aid of the sword; the hundred thousand armed men then encamped in and near Paris were not considered sufficient to secure the peace of the capital, if an attempt was not made to convince the understanding also, and to refute the false and pernicious theories which had betrayed the populace into those fearful excesses that have left an ineffaceable stain upon their own character, and made shipwreck of the cause of republicanism in Europe for a century to come. The Institute, the most illustrious body of literary and scientific men in Europe, answered the earnest appeal which was made to it with great alacrity; its most distinguished members, historians, philosophers, economists, and jurists, intermitting their accustomed labors, undertook to teach the first elements of their respective sciences to the distracted citizens.

It is surely a strange thing, that a city which claims to be at the head of European civilization, which has at this moment more refinement, more art, more science, more literature than any other city either of ancient or modern times, which is the capital of the fairest, nearly the most populous, and certainly the most enlightened country of Continental Europe, a country that has just thrown off the last remnant of kingly sway, and is now governed solely by the principle of universal suffrage, the will of the people acknowledging no limit or restraint whatever,—that this city, we say, should exhibit the most frightful scenes of anarchy and civil war, the arms of its inhabitants being madly turned against each other, that it should be in a state of siege for months, though no foreign enemy is within a thousand miles of its gates, martial law being proclaimed, the liberty of the press suspended, and its prisons crowded with those who, a few weeks before, were raised to the head of affairs, and conducted the government, as it seemed, with universal acclamation. Here in America,

certainly, we cannot believe that republican institutions are to blame for this lamentable state of things. We do not adopt the theory of Hobbes, that man is the natural enemy of man, and war his natural state, unless his evil propensities are checked and subdued by the iron yoke of absolute despotism. Yet all history affords nothing which seems to confirm this theory more strongly than the record of events in Paris during the last twenty months. We are bound to find some solution of the problem, or to acknowledge that society, even in its most enlightened state, is incapable of governing itself, and that universal suffrage is the most unsound and dangerous basis upon which it can be established. The streets of Paris and Lyons repeatedly crimsoned with blood, their houses torn with cannon shot and grape, their trade and industry at one time nearly annihilated, and their best citizens submitting to voluntary exile, are among the immediate consequences of that Revolution of February, which to many too sanguine persons appeared to augur the political and social regeneration of Europe.

It seems to be trifling with so grave a subject to affirm that the sole cause of the present deplorable condition of things in France is the prevalence of false systems and mistaken views on all the great subjects of religion, government, political economy, and civil liberty. But it is so; the fatal disease under which the people of France, especially the inhabitants of Paris, have long been laboring, is speculative fanaticism. The quality in which the French mind is most deficient is that large, vigorous, roundabout common sense, which is the most characteristic trait of an Englishman, and which we share by virtue of our English descent. "A Frenchman may have taste, imagination, genius, and enthusiasm in any particular pursuit; but he usually lacks the sober practical judgment, the reliance on the wisdom accumulated from long experience, the cautious distrust of novel theories and shining speculations, and the patient, unremitting industry, which are the conservative elements of every social organization. He speculates upon all subjects, and generalizes without end. He despises the old fashioned prejudices of the narrow minded islander, as he calls his neighbor across the Channel. Striving to get rid of all his own prejudices, his religious belief was unfortunately the first thing to be sacrificed. We risk nothing in calling

Paris the most irreligious capital in Europe. It is not the most immoral. Vienna is more licentious ; St. Petersburg is more given to drunkenness ; the Italian cities are more corrupt and debased. But nowhere is the portentous spectacle of great intellectual power and activity, untrammelled by belief in any thing, more frequent than in the splendid capital of France. Superstition has not even a foothold there ; it is a common saying among the Parisians, that none but old women go to mass. Their popular literature of the present day is steeped in the very dregs of infidelity ; it has almost preternatural power and brilliancy, but it is as soulless as the monster in *Frankenstein*. Witness the novels of George Sand, Balzac, and Eugène Sue, which seem to have come from the lowest depths of Acheron ; they reek with the fumes of Styx and Cocytus. Even the lighter productions of such humorists as Paul de Kock, Beranger, and Scribe, are deeply infected with this pestilential vapor ; only the devil in their pages is a smooth-faced gentleman, that grimaces and mocks, instead of appearing in his native ugliness and terrors, with horns and tail.

More than six years ago, in an article on the novels of Paul de Kock, we apologized for making any mention of such productions ; and our readers must excuse us for repeating a brief portion of the remarks then made.

“ We have had some scruples about laying before our readers such an account of the light literature of France at the present day as is given above, and in former articles upon the writings of George Sand and Alexandre Dumas. The question may be asked, Why take any notice of books, which, however indicative of a certain kind of talent, are not suited to the English or American taste, and contain much objectionable and offensive matter. Our answer is, that these publications, with all their faults, are curious, both as a warning and a study ; they tell us something respecting the workings of a depraved taste and imagination, and they throw much light on the character, situation, and opinions of a large portion of the reading population of France, where they enjoy a great and rapidly increasing popularity. They are as significant in their way, as were the writings of reflecting and speculative men among the French just before the revolution of 1789. They show what ideas are simmering in the great caldron of Paris, and what must be expected when the fire shall burn more fiercely, and the contents of the vessel shall rise to the

surface and overflow. . . . The character of these publications is at once an index and a cause of the state of opinion and sentiment among the people to whom they are addressed. Whatever grossness and immorality, whatever licentious speculations upon society, politics, and religion they may contain, they reflect but too faithfully the moral and intellectual condition of those who read them ; and in proportion to the energy and ability with which they are written, they heighten the very evils which they reveal." *

The graver literature of the day, in spirit and doctrine, corresponds entirely with these works of the imagination. Voltaire, D'Holbach, Diderot, and the other encyclopedists, it must be confessed, did their work very thoroughly ; they gave the tone to the course of speculation and doctrine in France, which has been preserved with little alteration to the present day, except perhaps that it has become more audacious and has a larger infusion of sentimentality. Mathematicians like Laplace, naturalists like St. Hilaire, physiologists like Cabanis and Broussais, historians and critics like Michelet and Quinet, economists like St. Simon, Fourier, and Proudhon, philosophers like Cousin, have but one point in common ; all of them are skeptics, many of them are scoffers. And the influence of their writings is immense. The French philosophers of the eighteenth century did not, indeed, produce the revolution of 1789, though they gave to it much of its form and coloring ; the worship of reason, the abolition of the Sabbath, and the massacre of the priests may be called their works. But the men of whom we are now speaking, with their followers and proselytes, are the proper authors of the revolution of February ; they both set the ball in motion, and determined the direction in which it should go. Their field of effort, indeed, was somewhat narrowed ; there were fewer opportunities to exercise their destructive talent. The Jacobins of the last century had a Church and a Nobility, two giant institutions covered with abuses, to pull down ; the Red Republicans of our own day, because religion and a peerage had no longer any thing but a nominal existence at Paris, were obliged to direct their crusade against property.

We speak of religion here only as one great restraint of

* *N. A. Review* for April, 1843, pp. 299, 300.

licentious and extravagant speculation, which, when released from this check, finds no further obstacle that is able to stay its career of exaggeration and folly. The national character of the French inclines very far to ultraism; they exaggerate whatever they undertake; they caricature their own principles. The maxim that extremes meet is perpetually exemplified in their character and conduct; they cannot distinguish the line which separates the sublime from the ridiculous. They will have no checks or balances in their system of government, no limitations to their principles, no bounds to their professions, no barriers to the progress of their arms. Their generalizations never stop short of the infinite. The constitutions, which they create and abolish with such ludicrous facility, are like machines which have abundance of motive power, but no check upon its consumption; the watch has no balance-wheel, and is therefore very irregular in its motions, and very quickly runs down. Thus, in the constitution which they have just established, they refused to divide the legislative power into two chambers; this would have been to injure the simplicity of the fabric, and to impose a check upon hasty legislation. Accordingly, the power of making laws, and, in fact, the whole government of the state, is exercised by one overgrown assembly, consisting of seven hundred members, collected from all parts of France, upon the principle of universal suffrage. As might have been expected, this legislative assembly has become a noisy and tumultuous debating club, wholly incapable of transacting business with efficiency and despatch. It is merely a mouthpiece of the factions of the metropolis; it follows the lead of the newspapers and the clubs in dwelling upon the exciting topics of the moment, to the almost total neglect of its proper task of organizing the state, and watching over the permanent interests of the country.

The passion for extreme generalizations, the constant tendency to excess, which is the great vice of the national character, appears nowhere more prominently than in the speculations of the leading demagogues of the hour, whose writings have thrown all France into convulsions. Nowhere but in Paris could crackbrained theorists like Cabet, Louis Blanc, and Proudhon, have obtained even a hearing. In France alone could a fantastic rhetorician, wholly devoid of

practical talent, like Lamartine, have established himself at the head of affairs by virtue of a theatrical manner and a few high-sounding speeches. But these men knew how to minister to the vanity of their countrymen, and to beguile them with promises of sweeping reforms to be effected in the state, and of the establishment of the French ideas of liberty, equality, and fraternity over the whole earth. Such gasconading professions would have ruined the cause of a political party in England or the United States; but they suited the tastes of the populace of Paris. False and pernicious as the doctrines of these men were, they pleased the multitude because they went all lengths, and were stated without exception or limit; sweeping theories, that promise the regeneration of the world, are very captivating to the imaginations of the vulgar. Their very universality renders them simple and easy of comprehension; a cautious judgment makes the statement of a principle complex, and burdens it with exceptions that violate its unity and destroy its attractiveness.

The party which made the revolution of February soon lost power and consideration, because they had promised too much. They were reckless in their engagements, and reckless in the choice of means to gain their ends. They succeeded in overthrowing the royal government, and establishing themselves in power; but their success proved their ruin. The fulfilment of their magnificent promises was then demanded of them, and as there were no longer any obstacles in the way, they were obliged to attempt the reduction of their theories to practice, and the lamentable issue of their experiments covered them with shame, and hurled them from their posts in disgrace. Instead of renovating the body politic, their nostrums aggravated its diseases till they became intolerable. Louis Blanc established himself in state at the Luxembourg, to begin his grand experiment of the reorganization of labor; the *soi-disant ouvrier* Albert brought up his ragged army of desperadoes to be fed, clothed, and lodged at the expense of the state. But the dictates of common sense and the laws of political economy were not to be violated with impunity. A general bankruptcy ensued; private manufacturing establishments were closed; the rich fled the country, or secreted their wealth; the laboring population were thrown out of employ, and the evils of their lot were aggra-

vated in a tenfold degree. In less than a year, Louis Blanc was a proscribed fugitive from justice, and Albert was sentenced to transportation for life. More recently, Ledru Rollin also has been obliged to seek safety in exile, and our poor phrase-making, gasconading friend, Lamartine, could not find a district in all France which was willing to return him as its delegate to the Legislative Assembly. He is thus cruelly obliged to keep silence, and has turned with characteristic ardor to writing memoirs of himself.

The cause, then, of the lamentable failure of republican institutions in France, is the extravagance of the doctrines which political sectaries and scheming fanatics have been allowed to propound, unnoticed and unrefuted by those who were capable of exposing their falsity, because it was wrongly supposed that their absurdity was so glaring that no one could be deceived by them but their authors. The lesson taught by this failure is, that in a country where the whole political power is lodged in the hands of the people, universal suffrage directing the entire course both of foreign policy and the internal administration, it is unsafe to allow corrupt and sophistical doctrines to be constantly preached to the multitude by those who are eager to make dupes of them, or who are themselves the dupes of their own devices, without an effort on the part of the intelligent portion of the community to expose their absurdity, and to substitute sound doctrines for them. The importance of this lesson is so impressively set forth by M. Thiers, in the preface to his little tract on the right of property, that we borrow his language.

“ Since society in France has been thrown into such a state of moral perturbation that the most natural, the most evident, and hitherto the most universally acknowledged truths are either doubted or audaciously denied, we must be permitted to prove them just as if they stood in need of proof. It is an irksome and difficult task, for there is nothing more irksome, nothing more difficult, than the attempt to demonstrate what is self-evident. Intuitive truths do not admit of demonstration. In geometry, for instance, there are what we call *axioms*, which form the limits of inquiry and demonstration; we stop when we have come to them, allowing them to rest upon their own evidence. Thus we say, that ‘ two parallel lines, however far extended, can never meet; ’ and ‘ a straight line is the shortest way from one point to another. ’ Having come to these truths, we no longer reason,

we no longer argue, but allow the self-evident fact to have its effect upon the understanding, and spare ourselves the trouble of adding, that if the two lines were to meet, they would not be always at an equal distance from each other, and so would not be parallel. We also spare ourselves the trouble of adding, that if the line traced from one point to another were not the shortest way between them, it would not be perfectly straight. In a word, we stop short at what is self-evident, and do not pretend to go beyond it.

“It is just so, moreover, with regard to certain moral truths, which we are accustomed to regard as axioms not demonstrable on account of their very obviousness. A man labors and receives the reward of his labor; this reward is money; this money he converts into bread, clothing, or in some way consumes it; or if he has too much, he lends it, and receives interest for it, upon which interest he supports himself; or he gives it away to whom-ever he pleases, to his wife, his children, or his friends. We had regarded these facts as the simplest of all, as the most legitimate, the most inevitable, the least susceptible of dispute or demonstration. But it was not so. These things, we are now told, were acts of usurpation and tyranny. There are those who attempt to teach this doctrine to the agitated, astonished, and suffering multitude; and whilst we, reposing upon the self-evident character of certain propositions, were allowing the world to go on of itself, as it did in the days when a great politician said, ‘*il mondo va da se,*’ we suddenly find it undermined by false doctrine; and if we do not wish society to perish, we must prove that which formerly, out of respect for the human intellect, we should never have undertaken to demonstrate. Well, be it so; we must defend society against dangerous sectaries, and for that purpose must condemn our understanding, and that of our contemporaries, to a dull and methodical demonstration of truths that have hitherto been universally admitted. Yes, let us establish again the wavering convictions of the multitude by attempting to render an account to ourselves of the most elementary truths. Let us imitate the Dutch, who, on learning that a little gnawing insect had attacked their dikes, hastened to those dikes to destroy the insect which was eating them away. Yes, let us hasten to the dikes! Our present concern is not to embellish the dwellings where our families live; we must prevent the dwellings themselves from crumbling into the abyss, and therefore must labor upon the very foundations by which they are supported.

“I am about, then, to labor upon the foundations on which society rests. I pray my contemporaries to aid me with their patience, to help me by their attention, in the painful argument

which I am to make ; since it is for their sake much more than for my own. For having already passed from youth to maturity, and from maturity to that point which in a few years will be old age, having witnessed many revolutions, and no longer expecting any thing or desiring any thing from any power on earth, and asking of Providence only to die with honor if I am to die, or to live surrounded by some esteem if I am to live, I do not labor for myself, but for society which is in peril ; and if, in all that I do, say, and write, I yield to any personal feeling, it is, I confess, to the profound indignation with which these doctrines inspire me that are begotten of ignorance, pride, and bad ambition,—that ambition which seeks to rise by destroying instead of building up. I appeal, then, to the patience of my contemporaries. I will endeavor to be clear, brief, peremptory in proving to them what they would never have supposed to be in need of proof ;—that is, that what they earned yesterday is their own, fairly their own, and that with it they may support themselves and their children. This is what we have come to, the point to which we have been led by false teachers acting in concert with a deluded multitude.”

The earnestness of these words shows the conviction of the writer that the peril is great and imminent. But he does not expose the whole extent of the danger. Limited by his subject to a defence of the right of property, he leaves the reader to infer, that it is at this point only that the very foundations of society are undermined, so that the whole structure is nodding to its fall. But the attack is far more general and dangerous ; so that, to adopt M. Thiers's illustration, the dikes need to be manned along their whole line, if the country is not to be inundated. The Institute itself, in allotting their various portions of the task to its several members, shows that it regards not only the right of property, but the cause of morals and religion, the ties which bind man to his fellow, the fundamental principles of society, the rights and duties of the laboring population, and the limits of civil and personal liberty, as all imperilled in this Saturnalia of opinion, this upheaval of the foundations of belief. The same recklessness, the same pernicious ultraism, of the speculatist and the demagogue, which have urged the populace of Paris and Lyons into a mad attack upon the institution on which every one of them depends for his daily bread, have induced them also to question, or audaciously to deny, nearly all the great truths on which the highest interests of humanity depend.

Some of these Doctors of the Academy, indeed, have been obliged to unlearn their own theories, or painfully to revise, extenuate, and limit them, so as to repudiate the frightful inferences which the mob were very willing to draw from such tempting premises. Cousin, for instance, who long ago attained that proud elevation in philosophy, those serene heights, whence he could look down upon religion, and kindly patronize "Christianity as the philosophy of the common people," has at last discovered that this religion, this "popular philosophy," is at any rate a very useful thing to society, so that it ought to be defended in times of trouble. Perhaps he begins to doubt whether it is worth while, on the whole, ever to go beyond it. He has certainly taken up his testimony in its favor;—or rather, fearful of the old taunt, *non tali auxilio, nec defensoribus istis, tempus eget*, he has, in a very characteristic manner, borrowed from Rousseau, who occupies about the same "platform of faith" with himself, the noted Confession of Faith of a Savoyard Vicar, and published it with an apologetic and laudatory preface, as a *philosophical* defence of natural religion which is quite well suited to the times! His former pupil, M. Damiron, having luckily escaped the effect of those doctrines which caused M. Jouffroy, another and more distinguished disciple of the same master, to die a broken-hearted skeptic, has written in a better spirit an excellent tract in defence of the providence of God in the affairs of this world;—a tract which we should be glad to see translated and published in this country, for besides its intrinsic merits, it deserves attention as almost the only contribution of the principal school of modern French philosophy to the cause of religious faith.

And to M. Thiers himself may be addressed in part the reproach of having contributed by his former writings to disseminate some of those pernicious principles, the bitter consequences of which he now deplures and is feebly endeavoring to remedy. As a brilliant and popular historian, he has labored effectually in the great work of deifying the Revolution of 1789. He has covered with eulogy the chief performers in the awful scenes of 1794. When he argues against the Red Republicans of the present day, they may tell him that they are but imitating, and feebly imitating, the terrible energy of the Jacobins of the former epoch, whose

excesses and crimes he has palliated, whose patriotism, firmness, and audacity he has praised. The admirers of Danton, Robespierre, and St. Just have no right to censure the principles, however they may despise the conduct, of such men as Louis Blanc, Albert, Lagrange, and Ledru Rollin. These men, indeed, can only caricature the ferocity and the crimes of their terrible prototypes; but they are not to blame for selecting such models, for in this respect they only follow the advice given to them by such writers as Lamartine and M. Thiers himself. These writers have falsified history in the most important respect, for they have contemned or perverted the moral lessons that it teaches. They have written in the spirit of demagogues, who were courting popular favor by excusing the monstrous crimes that were formerly perpetrated in the name of the people. They have not a word of horror and indignation to bestow on the authors of the massacres at the prisons in September. The cart that carried daily to the guillotine its load of forty or fifty innocent beings, many of them women, to be butchered there in cold blood, excites no feeling of compassion or horror in their breasts. Their theory is, that the Revolution was necessary, that it was fated to go on and prosper, though disorder, suffering, and criminality of every kind were the attendants or the means of its progress.

We know of nothing that is more offensive to good taste and common sense, as well as to sound principle, than the manner in which it has long been the fashion in France to speak of the earlier scenes of the former Revolution. It is not so much that any defence is set up for the excesses and crimes of that awful period, or any attempt made to justify the actors in them. But an entire unconsciousness is manifested that they need any excuse. Nay, more; they are held up as proofs of courage, decision, and patriotism that merit immortal renown. The agents in that fearful tragedy are portrayed in all the colors of poetry and eloquence as the heroes of French history, the stern and incorruptible patriots of an elder generation, the saviours of their country, the models for virtuous politicians in our own day. And who were these heroes? Danton, the object of Mr. Carlyle's special admiration, a reckless desperado, drunk with blood; St. Just, a hungry fanatic, with whom murder was a passion; Couthon, a monster as hideous in external appearance as in

his acts ; Robespierre, Lamartine's favorite, a selfish, canting, dastardly butcher, who ought to have been served as parricides were in the olden time, — sewn up in a sack with a cock, an asp, and a monkey, and then thrown into the sea. Why has history been falsified in regard to these men ? To pamper the insatiable national vanity of the French, and to serve the purposes of demagogues who wished to overthrow the government because they could not obtain places in it, and could find no better means of accomplishing their object than to fan the passions of the populace. The insurgents of June might have answered Thiers, Lamartine, Odillon Barrot, and Marrast, in the words of Shylock, — “The villany you teach me I will execute, and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction.”

The historian whose mournful office it is to speak of shameful and inhuman deeds, wherever or whenever committed, has no right to suppress or mitigate the sentence of righteous indignation which the common feelings of mankind instinctively pass upon them. If he does so from any selfish purpose of feeding the prejudices and gaining the applause of his countrymen, or of influencing the public policy of the state, he is as much responsible for the deplorable consequences that will assuredly follow, as if he had directly labored to produce them. The fearful crimes committed by the Jacobins during the Reign of Terror form the darkest page in the history of France ; all the eloquence and the sophistry of the popular authors who have recently written upon the subject cannot cleanse it from the stain of blood. As well might they attempt to justify the terrible proscriptions of Marius and Sylla, the butchery committed by Alva in the Netherlands, or the fires at Smithfield in Queen Mary's reign. It is a hollow pretence, that the imminent peril to which the French republic was then exposed made these executions necessary. No state necessity can justify the deliberate murder of thousands of innocent human beings ; and it is not true that the guillotine saved France from the foreign invader. Not the September massacres, but the manœuvres, perhaps the negotiations, of Dumourier, checked the advance of the Prussians from Verdun. And at the later period, after the fall of the Girondists, all danger of invasion had ceased ; the Republic was then the assailant on

all its borders, and was carrying its victorious arms far into the Netherlands. There was rebellion, it is true, at Lyons, at Marseilles, at Nantes;—or rather, what the Jacobins called rebellion, for it was the desperate attempt of the moderate republicans, of five-sixths of the French people, to shake off the despotism of a mere faction, which had usurped the government. The axe was kept at work at Paris, not to terrify the royalists, or the Austrians, or the English, but to perpetuate the iron rule of Jacobinism, to confirm the power of that terrible triumvirate of which Robespierre was the chief. Outnumbered even in Paris, and forming but a feeble minority in all France, (as was proved by subsequent events,) the Jacobins could maintain their post only by paralyzing their opponents through terror. And this bloody strife of factions at Paris, years after the power of royalty in France had been crushed, it is now the fashion to represent as a death-struggle against tyranny, and a heroic vindication of the political independence of France!

We may appear to dwell too long upon this topic; but the constant assumption by the furious republicans at Paris of the names, the watchwords, and the principles of the Terrorists of the last century, shows that the memory of these men is now held in high esteem, instead of being devoted to lasting infamy. The radical party in the present Assembly is not merely branded by its opponents as *La Montagne*, but assumes this formidable name of its own accord, as an honorable appellation. The clubs are organized upon the model of the Jacobins and the Cordeliers. The propagandism of French principles of "liberty, equality, and fraternity" over all Europe is again the favorite dream of the vain-glorious patriots of France. The guillotine, indeed, is not permitted for the second time to make the gutters of the capital run with blood; but no indistinct murmurs were heard that its reëstablishment would soon be necessary to prevent the too rapid progress of "the reaction." A silly attempt was made by the Provisional Government to restore the Jacobin titles of *Citoyen* and *Citoyenne*; and "the Republic one and indivisible" became again the appellation of the state. In vain do the moderate republicans reprobate the folly and wickedness of this theatrical mummary, this attempt to revive badges and watchwords which were buried half a century

ago with the occasions that produced them. The mere phraseology, it is admitted, is insignificant and even ludicrous ; but it has a terrible significance as the token of a revival of the principles, and a disposition to imitate the conduct, of the party which first adopted it. The writers who have taught France to worship the memory of that party have now no right to complain that the lessons are reduced to practice, and their ideal Jacobinism is made actual.

Yet M. Thiers, who has all the adroitness of a veteran politician in shifting his position, can argue thus plausibly, when it suits his purpose, against the attempt to assimilate the Revolution of 1848 to its formidable predecessor.

“Those who assumed the direction of affairs after the expulsion of the king, enlightened by a commencement of experience, are in no hurry to keep their imprudent engagements. But those who have not the power, and have had no experience to profit by, persist in demanding a *social* revolution. A social revolution ! Can one be had by wishing for it ? Even if the power were not wanting, as it can sometimes be gained by agitating a suffering people, it would be necessary to find the materials for it. We must have a society to reform ; and if it was reformed long ago, what are we to do ? Ah ! You are jealous of the glory of accomplishing a social revolution. Very well, then ; you ought to have been born sixty years earlier — to have entered upon your career in 1789. Without deceiving the people, or perverting their inclinations, you would then have had the means, first of exciting their enthusiasm, and afterwards of sustaining it. At that period, in truth, all the community were not subject to taxation. The nobility bore but a portion of it, the clergy were not taxed at all, except when it pleased them to make voluntary gifts. The same justice was not meted out to all for their offences. For one class there was the gibbet, and for another a thousand ways of avoiding the infamy or the death which they had richly merited. All could not obtain public office, whatever their talents might be, on account of some obstacle of birth or of religion. There existed, under the name of feudal rights, a multitude of obligations which did not originate in some contract freely consented to, but were usurpations of might over right. No one could bake his bread, except at the oven of his feudal lord, or grind his corn except at the lord’s mill ; he must purchase exclusively his lord’s commodities, must submit to his administration of justice, must allow his harvest to be devoured by his lord’s game. No one could practise the various handicrafts till he had passed through certain forms of

admission previously established by the masters of the guilds and the corporations. Tolls were levied on transportation from one province to another, and there was intolerable oppression in the mode of collecting the taxes. The ratio of taxation to property was insupportable. Besides the magnificent estates belonging to the clergy and held in mortmain, it was necessary to pay them the better portion of the agricultural products of the year under the appellation of tithes. All these burdens were for the middle and lower classes ; and as to the generality, there were censors for those who felt disposed to write, the Bastille for those who were intractable, the parliaments for unfortunate persons like Labarre and Calas, and intervals of centuries between the meetings of the States General which might have reformed so many abuses.

“ Thus, on the immortal night of the 4th of August, all classes of the population, magnificently represented in the Constituent Assembly, were able to come and sacrifice something upon the altar of their common country. In truth, all had something to bring to it ; — the privileged classes their exemption from taxation, the clergy their property, the nobility their titles and feudal rights, the provinces their separate constitutions. In a word, all classes had a sacrifice to make, and they accomplished it with general exultation. This triumph was not the joy of a few, but the joy of all, the joy of a people enfranchised from vexations of every kind, the joy of the Third Estate relieved from their degradation, the joy of the nobles then keenly sensible of the pleasure of doing good. It was an intoxication of gladness, an exaltation of humanity, which induced us to embrace the whole world in our ardent patriotism.

“ Attempts have not been wanting for some time past to agitate the mass of the people as much as possible ; — have they produced the enthusiasm of 1789 ? Certainly not ; and why not ? Because what is already done no longer remains to do ; because, on a night like that of the 4th of August, we should have nothing to sacrifice. Is there, in truth, anywhere an oven or a mill of a feudal lord to be suppressed ? Is there any game which you cannot kill if it comes upon your ground ? Are there any censors, other than the irritated populace, or the dictatorship which is its representative ? Are there any Bastilles ? Are there any incapacities produced by one’s religion or one’s birth ? Is there any one to whom all offices are not open ? Is there any other inequality than that of mind, which is not imputable to the laws, or that of fortune, which is derived from the right of property ? Make a trial now, if you can, of a 4th of August ; erect an altar of the country, and tell us what you will bring to it. Abuses ? Oh ! certainly, they are not wanting, and they never will be

wanting at any time. But a few abuses on an altar of the country erected in the open air is too trifling a sacrifice ; other offerings are needed. Search, then ; search in that society which has been taken to pieces and made over again so many times since '89, and I defy you to find any thing but the right of property for an offering. This they have not failed to attempt to sacrifice ; and here is the deplorable origin of the present controversy upon the subject.

“ All the partisans of a social revolution, it is true, do not wish to sacrifice property to the same extent. Some wish to abolish it altogether, others in part ; these would be content to have labor remunerated in a different manner, those wish to proceed by taxation. But all, in one degree or another, attack property in order to redeem a kind of pledge which they gave by promising to accomplish a social revolution. We must combat, therefore, all these odious, puerile, ridiculous, but pernicious systems, begotten like a swarm of insects from the decomposition of all government, and filling the air in which we live. Such is the origin of this state of things, which will bring upon us, even if society is saved, either the contempt or the compassion of the next age.”

This is a very animated attempt to prove that the Revolution of '89 affords neither precedent nor justification for that of '48 ; and as it comes from the person whose political tactics afforded the opening and the occasion by which the authors of the last Revolution profited in overthrowing the last royal dynasty in France, we may suppose that the warmth of his language is a little increased by the desire to shift from his own shoulders the responsibility of having favored this last outburst of impatient republicanism. M. Thiers was the chief of the dynastic opposition during the last seven or eight years of Louis Philippe's reign. He now declares very earnestly, that his opposition was directed not against the form of the royal government, but against the policy of its administration ; he wished to alter its course, not to whelm it beneath a deluge of republicanism. We have no doubt that such were his intentions ; he wished only to get M. Guizot *out* of office, and himself *in*, but had the misfortune of creating a revolution through the means which he adopted only to cause a change of ministry. If his object was to fight only a parliamentary battle, the hall of legislation was his proper arena. Unluckily he determined, in the English phrase, to throw himself upon the country. Impa-

tient of being so long excluded from office by the superior tact and statesmanship of his rival, he resolved to try the dangerous experiment of agitating the people on the subject of changing the basis of representation in the Chambers. How much he had this subject of electoral reform at heart may be inferred from the fact that, during the years in which he was himself prime minister, he took not one step to promote it, and in fact never opened his lips upon the topic. But politicians out of office rapidly acquire new views about the necessity of certain reforms in the state; and M. Thiers was at last convinced, that it was very oppressive and tyrannical on the part of the king and the ministry to refuse this boon to the people. He therefore labored to convince the dear people, that they were much aggrieved in this respect; and he succeeded, greatly to his own astonishment and chagrin, not only in displacing M. Guizot, but in overthrowing the government. In the general confusion that ensued, the republicans, with characteristic effrontery, appropriated to themselves the oyster, and gave MM. Guizot and Thiers each a shell.

It is more consonant with our present purpose to remark, that this vehement defence of the changes effected in '89, affords no apology whatever for the proceedings of the Jacobins three or four years afterwards. It was not till the 10th of August, 1792, three years after the memorable night on which all grievances which, according to the present views of M. Thiers, could justify a social revolution were redressed, that the king was dethroned, the monarchy abolished, and the party of the Mountain began its monstrous career of oppression and butchery. The Red Republicans of our own day take for their models, not the reformers of the earlier period, but the Terrorists of the later one, who have been held up to them as examples for imitation by nearly all the popular writers of France, M. Thiers himself included. These authors have sowed the wind, and they are now obliged to reap the whirlwind.

The extraordinary display of intellectual power in France, during the last half century, has only enhanced the evil. Nowhere in the world have the rewards of literary exertion been so tempting and brilliant; not even in our own favored country has it been so easy for high intellectual endowments and

literary activity to force their way to distinction and power. The time has gone by, we say it sorrowfully, when either high character or preëminent ability can raise its possessor to an eminent political position in the United States; for the highest office of all, they operate almost as a disqualification. The great statesmen of the country, Webster, Clay, Calhoun, are found to be "unavailable" candidates; they are passed over in favor of the respectable mediocrity that is favored by the accident of local position, a fortunate but momentary connection with some remarkable event, like a successful battle, and of unsettled because unexpressed opinions on the controverted topics of the day. To be a lucky aspirant for any office which lies directly in the gift of the people, it is necessary that one's *name* should be well known, but that every other circumstance respecting him, his previous history, his character, and his opinions, should have as little notoriety as possible. And in one respect, our people are not to be blamed for making such a choice; they do not want a governor or a ruler, but one who will consent to be governed or ruled by his constituents. A public officer is here literally a public servant. He who has an opinion of his own, which he has the boldness to avow and the ability to defend, is not fitted to be a mere mouthpiece of the opinions of others. The President of the United States is only a figure-head of the ship of state, and will soon find out his mistake if he attempts to make himself its rudder. The operation of the same cause in the newly established French republic has made Louis Napoleon, who has a name and nothing else, *vox et præterea nihil*, its first President.

But it was not so under the monarchy in that country. A throne cannot stand alone; its great elevation will certainly cause it to topple down, unless its base is made broad and strong by an order of men who occupy the vast interval which separates the monarch from the people. In the British constitution, the nobility form the steps that lead up to the throne, and give it stability and support. The French *noblesse* perished in the catastrophe of 1789, and the monarchy has been insecure ever since. Napoleon tried to buttress his imperial throne by an aristocracy of the sword; he made his most distinguished generals counts and dukes of the empire, and to support their dignity established *majorats*, the only infringe-

ment that was permitted of the French law requiring equal division of estates. But even with the aid of fixed property, these men could not maintain themselves at a permanent elevation above the people, from whose very lowest ranks they had but recently sprung. The Duke of Abrantes had been a stable boy; the Prince of Moscow began his military career as a private dragoon. A mushroom aristocracy of such persons as these could lend no real aid to royalty; and it disappeared in the shock of the Restoration. Louis XVIII. gathered around him the wreck of the old *noblesse*; but as they were few in number, as their estates had been confiscated, and they had lost even the *prestige* of rank through the privations they had endured in exile, they were soon jostled aside by untitled persons of commanding talents and high character. The pen of Chateaubriand and Benjamin Constant had vastly more influence than the faded dignity of the Montmorencis, the Polignacs, and the Richelieus, who still lingered superfluous on the stage. The fickle and excitable character of the French makes them very susceptible of impression from brilliant rhetoric and fervid declamation. A knot of able and eloquent journalists was soon gathered at Paris, who swayed the national will as the winds move the sea. By a succession of brilliant and epigrammatic pamphlets, Chateaubriand formed and unseated ministries in spite of the will of the monarch and the feeble opposition of the peers. The king was prudent, and bowed before the storm which he could not control; he allowed to literary talent at least an equal share of influence with hereditary rank. But his brother succeeded him, a bigot to legitimacy and Catholicism, and he lost his throne in a vain attempt to muzzle the terrible press of Paris.

The lesson was not lost upon so sagacious a prince as Louis Philippe, who quietly allowed a death-blow to be struck at the old aristocracy by the law abolishing the hereditary descent of the peerage, and gave his government entirely into the hands of those who were the most capable of influencing the will of the people. The aristocracy of birth had passed away; the aristocracy of the sword had enjoyed only a momentary existence; and the throne now rested upon an aristocracy of talent, which is from its very nature wavering, unsettled in its ranks, capable of indefinite extension, and

therefore tumultuous. Distinguished authors, men of science, journalists, and eminent bankers filled all the prominent offices in the state. Guizot and Thiers, men of yesterday, who had won their spurs as historians and editors, became prime ministers; Villemain and Cousin, their most eminent colleagues in the Institute and the lecture room, became their colleagues also in the ministry. The patronage in the hands of these men was immense, as all branches of public affairs are centralized in France, the administration of the church, of public instruction, of the roads and other local affairs of the several departments, being all determined at Paris. The *bureaucracy* was consequently very powerful, and in its countless ramifications were found places and employment for all kinds and degrees of talent. The encouragement thus afforded to literature was magnificent, and it developed an amount of literary talent and activity to which we can find no parallel even in the age of Louis XIV. Take the department of history alone, and how long the list of illustrious names that can now be reckoned up in France; Guizot, Sismondi, the two Thierrys, Michelet, Thiers, Barante, Mignet, and a host of others. In the literature of criticism, philosophy, and fiction; in poetry, the drama, and *belles lettres*; in natural history and the physical sciences, the array of eminent names certainly cannot be matched either in England or Germany. The patronage of Louis Philippe's government was conducted on very liberal principles; not only professorships in the university, but the other offices under government that are usually given to professional or literary persons, were often held by warm opponents of the ministry; there was no proscription of talent for opinion's sake.

But the newspapers profited most by this extraordinary development of literary talent. The journals of Paris did not, indeed, equal those of London in the variety and copiousness of the information afforded upon all topics of interest; but for vigor, spirit, and eloquence in the discussion of public affairs they were unequalled. Nothing escaped their watchfulness, no opportunity was left unimproved to inculcate their peculiar doctrines. Instead of depending on the energy and activity of one man, as a newspaper in this country usually does, a corps of effective writers was enlisted in support of each; and political influence rather than pecu-

niary gain being the chief object in view, their course was not trammelled by deference to the opinions of one class of readers. Bold, unscrupulous, often malignant, excelling in sarcasm and invective, these journals had absolute control of the popular mind; they swayed the destinies of France. Besides the writers who devoted themselves exclusively to their support, ministers of state, professors in the university, the most eminent authors in France, contributed occasionally to their columns. Their criticisms covered the whole field of public affairs, of literature, art, and science; and so great was their influence, that the fortune and reputation of any young aspirant in these several departments of effort, unless he was gifted with extraordinary genius, were entirely at their disposal. In vain were the most stringent laws made to repress their licentiousness; a public prosecution of one of them only increased its celebrity, and roused its partisans to fresh efforts for its support. The fine was paid either by subscription or out of the reserved fund of the association, and the "responsible editor," who was the whipping-boy of the establishment, suffered the imprisonment, and from his place of incarceration wrote articles with greater acrimony than ever. Why should not their influence be immense? In France, as well as England and the United States, much the larger portion of those who read at all, read nothing but the newspapers and the popular novels of the day. The time for political pamphlets has passed away; if Burke were alive now, he would publish his *Reflections on the French Revolution* in the columns of the *Times*. The importance even of political discussions in great legislative assemblies is rapidly diminishing; great statesmen make their speeches there only that they may be reported the next morning in the newspapers. At least, it is so in Parliament and the French Assembly; in our Congress, the speeches are usually so poor that editors do not usually think them worth publishing, unless they are paid for it with the public money.* The real battle nowadays is carried on in the newspapers.

* We are sorry to confess it, but it is so. The Senate of the United States last winter kept a corps of reporters and two daily newspapers in pay, and their debates were reported at length. The Representatives were parsimonious and boggled about the terms; so their speeches were not reported at all. We are not aware that the country suffered from the privation.

To show the enormous influence that literary men and journalists acquired under the late dynasty in France, we may refer not only to the several ministries that were formed under Louis Philippe, but to the list of members of the Provisional Government who, with characteristic audacity, appointed themselves to office after his fall, and to whom the whole country quietly submitted, as if the selection were a very natural and proper one. Three of them, Marrast, Flocon, and Louis Blanc, were editors of newspapers; a fourth, Albert, supported a newspaper, not indeed by his brains, but his purse; a fifth, Lamartine, was an eminent poet and historian; and Arago, a *savant* whose scientific fame is known to all the world, was a sixth.* Very properly, the Secretary of this remarkable association of men of letters was Pagnerre, a bookseller; and the epicene novelist, George Sand, had the credit of writing the despatches of the Minister of the Interior. Indeed, the Revolution of February was planned and directed in two newspaper offices at Paris, the *Réforme* and the *National*; and its most novel and characteristic feature was given to it by two publications of Louis Blanc, the *Histoire de Dix Ans* and the *Organisation du Travail*.

Louis Philippe found by sad experience that an aristocracy of talent can lend but a feeble and wavering support to a monarchy. Talent is necessarily democratic in its origin, for it must be recognized wherever it is found, and nothing can be more irregular than its distribution by the laws of nature. The members of such a society must be gathered from all ranks of social life, and from all parts of the kingdom, with their habits, opinions, and associations already formed before their claims of admission to the peerage of mind are determined. They come together not as friends, but as rivals, often as foes; for though the interests of letters are one, the interests of men of letters are many and diverse. Under the sun of royal patronage, their number may be indefinitely increased, and the competition among them soon becomes

* In England, as well as we can recollect, Lord Brougham and Mr. Macaulay are the only Cabinet Ministers of the present century who have gained distinction in the field of letters. Lord John Russell, Sir John Hobhouse, and Lord Campbell have dallied with the Muses; but their literary fame is quite secondary to their political reputation. Sir James Mackintosh was not in the Cabinet, and his distinction as a writer and a philosopher was thought to be an obstacle to his advancement.

fiery. If they look chiefly to the state for countenance and support, and, still more, if the chief places in the government are to be distributed among them, politics assume a disproportionate share in their labors, and the sanctuary of letters and science is profaned by the introduction of false gods. Poetry, history, and philosophy are employed in an illegitimate service, and lose their distinctive glories; if made subservient to the purposes of the day, they become ephemeral also in their duration and renown. Besides, there is something in that remarkable development of talent in one direction that is called genius, which is unsuited to the conduct of affairs in this working-day world; if Pegasus is harnessed to a cart, he generally upsets it. The true man of business is usually a person of very small talents harmoniously developed; he is not far-sighted in any one direction, but he looks on all sides. The poet has the eye of an eagle, but it is always turned towards the sun, and on the earth he walks no better than if he were blind. What a sorry figure Demosthenes made as a general, and Horace as a soldier, and Addison as secretary of state, and Lamartine before the barricades of June! Louis Blanc as a Minister at the Luxembourg, attempting to reduce his Utopian theories to practice, soon excited the scorn and indignation of the Parisians themselves.

The congregation round Louis Philippe's government of distinguished *littérateurs* and *savans* (how provoking it is that we have no English names to designate these classes!) gave a certain degree of splendor to his administration, but increased the real difficulties of his position. The rivalry of these men was hot and fierce, and the contests in which they were engaged were blazoned through the press to all France. They were restless and turbulent; the measures of those who formed the ministry for the time were criticized with unsparing severity by those who hoped to succeed them. In other countries, the number of aspirants for high office is necessarily very limited; few possess the qualifications of rank, political connections, experience, and talent which would enable them to enter the arena with any hope of success. In France, every man of an ambitious temperament and a scheming brain, who could pen a pungent paragraph in a newspaper, considered himself a fit person to enter the ministry. Why

should he not succeed, when such a literary adventurer as Thiers had shown the way? It was only necessary to create some agitation among the people, to advocate some sweeping measure of reform, some plan for a new organization of society, or for increasing the glory of France, or to expose the blunders of the ministry in their foreign policy or in the conduct of internal affairs. No matter though the scheme proposed should be as absurd as Louis Blanc's plan for a new organization of labor; or the criticism of the ministers' proceedings as unfounded as the foolish clamor against Guizot on account of the Pritchard indemnity; or the project as hot-headed as the attempt of M. Thiers in 1840, to excite a general war in Europe because France felt her dignity insulted when the other powers made a settlement of the Eastern question without asking her to coöperate with them. The reasonableness of the project, the matter of the complaint, was of little importance; every thing depended on the zeal, energy, and unscrupulousness with which it was proposed and urged. Among a people so excitable as the French, and so sensitive on the point of national honor, it was easy to raise a tempest, though it related only to some insignificant occurrence on a little island in the remote Pacific.

That tendency to exaggeration and excess, also, which is the great vice of the national character, was aggravated by the interference of men of letters in the political contests of the day. Such persons, in the conduct of practical affairs, seldom know how to moderate their feelings, their language, or their theories. Their discourse is more violent and exciting on account of their mastery of language; their words, because unusually expressive and forcible, really express to the apprehension of common people more than they mean. The bitterness of literary and theological controversies can often be explained in this way, when it is known that the combatants are men of gentle tempers and kind hearts. The violence of the Paris newspapers signified very little to those who conducted them; they deliberately worked themselves up into a towering passion, and ransacked the vocabulary of abuse with admirable coolness. They thundered against Louis Philippe and Guizot as if they were exposing the vices and crimes of Tiberius and Sejanus; yet the former was a sagacious and liberal, though a self-seeking monarch, and the

only real fault of the latter in the eyes of his opponents was that he was too much of a Puritan, — too inflexible both in his principles and his manners. The war against both was waged with unflagging zeal and acrimony, till the monarchy was overthrown, and both were driven from the kingdom. Then, indeed, the victors began to ask themselves what the offences of these men were, but they could find naught against them; and when, after hardly a year's absence, M. Guizot quietly returned to France, no one thought of molesting him. Yet recollecting the bitterness with which the ministers of Charles X. were pursued, no one will accuse the French people of showing too much kindness and magnanimity towards a fallen political oppressor.

A writer, M. de Broglie, in the *Revue des deux Mondes* for September, 1848, in speaking of the labors of the National Assembly upon the new constitution, frankly confesses that they could find no injuries to redress and no additional guaranties that could be given to liberty. He admits that it is necessary for the preservation of society rather to strengthen the hands of the government about to be established, and to enlarge its powers, than to seek further protection for the liberties of the governed.

“It is sad, I confess, but six months after a revolution to have only the word *repression* upon our lips. One would have chosen rather to enumerate with pride the new rights and precious immunities which the constitution was to give to France in exchange for its revolutionary sufferings. It is neither our fault, nor the fault of the authors of the constitution, that unfortunately this cannot be. They have done their best to find in the society which the monarchy has handed over to them some exclusive privileges to be taken away, some chains to be broken, and to inscribe at the head of their work some rights till now unacknowledged; in a word, they wished that the new constitution might have its declaration of the rights of man, and its night of the 4th of August. Unluckily, in order to abolish exclusive privileges, it is necessary that some should exist, and before we can emancipate a people, they must have been enslaved. Now it is found, after searching carefully, that, in regard to exclusive privileges, there were none in France, except a few guaranties of capacity and of an interest in the state, which no one ever thought of using for his own advantage, and of which the most interested holders will not regret the sacrifice, if a second experiment should demonstrate to them that universal suffrage is strictly compatible

with the support of public order and a proper degree of intelligence in the conduct of the administration. Striving for something more, the most determined lovers of equality have just dashed their heads against the right of property, a solid and steadfast rock, on which more violent waves than those of the revolution of February will break without injury. The attempts at innovation in respect to liberty have not been more fortunate. The authors of the new declaration of rights have vainly racked their invention to discover a pretended natural right, the right to labor, and a political right which they have baptized by the name of the right of assemblage. Indiscreet disclosures have already taught us what the first of these rights would be, if they should take it in earnest. We shall see what will become of the second one between the queer restrictions in which its regular form is swaddled and bound up, and the justly severe law which forbids casual assemblages under severe penalties. This is the whole amount of the political innovations of the new constitution on the liberal side, and, with the best intentions in the world, its authors have not been able to make them more numerous. We are not to find fault with the instrument, if beyond the liberty which we were already enjoying six months ago, [before the revolution of February,] there remains nothing but licentiousness; and if, in respect to the guards and protectives of society, France long since ceased to have any thing that was superfluous, so that any diminution of them makes them fall below what is absolutely necessary. And in all justice, we are not to find fault with it, although its authors indeed have something to reproach themselves with in this respect, if fifty years of revolution have left in what was the dregs, but which is now the froth, of our society, an army of fanatics who respect the popular majesty of universal suffrage no more than they did the pomp of monarchy, whom order displeases because it is order, and the law because it is the law, whom the restraint of the laws irritates though it cannot subdue, and whose audacity, always recovering itself after it has been chastised, constantly keeps the peace of society on the rack, so that, however little inclination one may have for the name of conservative, personal preservation becomes, in spite of themselves, the first and almost the only object that claims the attention of every government in France. This is a truth which was already quite evident to many persons under the last dynasty, and which stands in no need of demonstration now. Certainly it is not with a malignant pleasure unworthy of a good citizen, but with a mournful satisfaction, that we see confirmed opinions that we have long entertained respecting the state of society; and that we now hear our revolutionists of yesterday abjuring one after another, at the tribune, the errors which it pleases them to qualify

as *chivalrous*, and stammering out with an inexperienced voice those conservative maxims, which, in a more eloquent form, have long been familiar to us. If the Provisional Government itself, towards the close of its term, and in its official language, had almost become a conservative government, who can flatter himself that he will escape this common necessity? The political prisons which *that* government was obliged to open again, who will delude himself with the hope of closing forever?"

Can any thing be more ridiculous and humiliating for a nation than to be obliged to confess, that it has just made a great political revolution *by mistake*; — that with magnificent professions of patriotism and self-devotion, at a great cost of blood and effort, and to the almost total ruin of its finances, its commerce, and its industry, it has just overturned one government, and finds itself immediately obliged to establish a stronger one in its place; — that the whole movement was in truth a magnificent blunder, since they find that there was no oppression to be resisted, there were no abuses to be done away, no chains to be broken, no rights to be established, no privileges to gain; — that they have expelled a king as unworthy to govern them, and they now learn that they are incapable of governing themselves? Yet this is what France has come to through its perversely exaggerated notions of liberty and democracy, and from lending too ready an ear to the eloquent demagogues, who, as they could not obtain a place in the government, have succeeded in overthrowing it.

Those who were most active, however, in effecting this great political blunder, are likely to be themselves the greatest and most permanent sufferers by it. We do not refer merely to those who have been the leaders in the several popular outbreaks, actuated apparently only by a frantic desire to imitate the excesses and the crimes of the Jacobins of 1794. These, indeed, in prison or in exile, are suffering a terrible retribution for the outrages that they have committed, their punishment seeming the more severe as it followed so quickly their short-lived elevation over the populace of Paris and the destinies of France. But men like Barbès, Blanqui, Courtais, Raspail, and Caussidière, though they were the leaders of the mob at the barricades, are not the original authors of the movement which has plunged the country into anarchy. They were but the hands; while the unprincipled men of let-

ters and science, the speculatists in political and social economy, the journalists and pamphleteers, were the proper heads of the conspiracy, and they have effectually destroyed their power of doing further mischief for the present. They have fired the palace in which for many years they had found a luxurious home. The aristocracy of talent has perished with the monarchy which leaned on it for support; and the republic, parsimonious and utilitarian in its views as republics always must be, has fallen into the hands of men of action rather than of contemplation. It was the Jacobin St. Just who exclaimed, "this nobility of fame is worse than a nobility of blood." The future levellers and agitators in Paris must be men of a coarser grain; the *Gironde* has given place to the *Montagne*. Arago has gone back to the observatory, which he ought never to have quitted, to resume his watch upon the comets and stars. Lamartine has turned hack-writer again, to redeem his estate from bankruptcy, and now publishes a new romance once a month about himself and the history of the republic. Marrast and Flocon, *duo fulmina belli*, the two editors in whose offices the whole revolution was concocted, are not even reëlected to the Assembly; and the inordinate influence of journalism at Paris is gone forever. One of their first acts as members of the Provisional Government, striking off the whole tax on newspapers, was suicidal; the immediate consequence was to reduce the newspaper press of France to a level with that of the United States. Within a fortnight, newspapers became as cheap, as abundant, and as little respected in Paris as in New York. Their power was lost by diffusion; talent as well as decency disappeared from their columns; and their efforts were turned from attacking the government to maintaining a fierce competition with each other.

And generally, the avatar of democracy in Europe during the past year has been a portentous event for the interests of letters and science all over the Continent. In this great convulsion of society, it could not be but that the quiet pursuits of learning should suffer. The governments that were in peril were compelled to make the most strenuous efforts for their own safety, and had neither time nor money to bestow for the support of universities and institutions of science. Professors and students, also, were seized by the universal

contagion, and quitted the lecture room and the laboratory for the defence of the barricades or for the exciting debates of a constituent assembly. They have even played a prominent part in this new sphere of action. We have seen how many of them were employed in France; in Germany, it is said that professors and men of letters formed a large majority of the assembly at Frankfort. And while the teachers were deliberating upon new constitutions for the state, the students were fighting in the streets, or marching with the troops in the holy crusade of liberty. In Vienna and Berlin, the members of the universities were the leaders of the insurgents, and the revolutionary movement received from them its impulse and direction. The few who were so devoted to their former profession as to remain quietly in the ancient halls of learning are left without sympathy or means of support. Many of the organized institutions for the advancement of knowledge are broken up, or have suspended their activity; some of the most eminent professors and *savans* in Europe have been obliged to sell their books to procure bread for their families, and are looking wistfully to this country for a refuge. A few have already come to take up their abode with us, and others are on the way. One of the most eminent astronomers in Europe, Professor Schumacher, has lately made an earnest appeal to his scientific brethren in England and the United States, that their remonstrances might save the excellent institution over which he presides at Altona from desertion and ruin. Whether the injury that the cause of learning has received from this outburst of democracy is to be permanent or temporary, is a question that we do not care to discuss; but the anticipations of those who are most deeply interested in it are by no means favorable.

It matters not how long the mere forms of republicanism are preserved in France; it is obvious that the great majority of the people are heartily tired of their second trial of a republic, and would hail nothing more gladly than a restoration of the monarchy. If there were not several claimants of the throne, Changarnier might play the part of General Monk tomorrow, and the people would welcome back their sovereign with as much enthusiasm as the English showed when Charles II. landed at Dover. Unluckily, the pretensions of the Bourbon, the Orleans, and the Bonaparte families

cross each other, and till this dispute is decided, any one candidate for the throne would encounter fierce opposition. The people wish for royalty, but cannot decide who shall be their king. They repudiated a republican government as significantly as they could, when, at the first trial of universal suffrage, they made choice of *Prince Louis Napoleon* to be their president; the nephew of an emperor was the nearest possible substitute for an hereditary ruler. Twice, then, within sixty years, they have made trial of a republic, and twice the experiment has failed. The second time, the circumstances were far more favorable than on the former occasion; the monarchy had left the country in a prosperous condition; there was no famine in the land, the crops had been abundant, and there was not even a menace of invasion from abroad. The causes of failure were wholly internal then, and must be found in the mistaken notions of the people themselves respecting the nature of free institutions, and the mode in which they must contribute, if at all, to the welfare of the country. They expected that a republican government would accomplish for them that which a people can accomplish only for themselves; that it would remove the inequalities of fortune, increase the rewards of labor, facilitate the acquisition of wealth, and promote the national glory. They might as well have expected that it would increase the fertility of the soil. Theorists and demagogues have diffused their unfounded notions and expectations among the people, and from their inevitable disappointment have resulted the failure of the revolution, and all the miseries which this failure has entailed upon the country.

The former French revolution undoubtedly received its initial impulse from our own struggle for independence. Lafayette and the French troops who had served in America carried back with them the infection of liberty. As the war had been popular with their countrymen on account of the general hatred of England, and as the presence of Dr. Franklin in Paris had already created an enthusiasm for the American cause, the successful issue of the contest was matter of great rejoicing, and the novel opinions which the officers and men brought home with them, respecting the capacity of a nation to govern itself without the intervention of a king, were received with curiosity and favor. The proceedings of the

Continental Congress were attentively watched in France ; and the interesting spectacle of the delegates from all our States meeting in convention in 1787, to form a new constitution for the people of this country, unquestionably had its effect upon the deliberations of the States General, which were convoked two years afterwards, just after our new frame of government had gone into successful operation. The prominent agency of Lafayette in both revolutions also proves the intimate connection between them ; and it is a curious and not insignificant fact, that St. Simon, the founder of the noted school of political and social economy which bears his name, and which subsequently branched out into Fourierism, and the thousand other schemes of social equality that have recently created so much confusion and disaster in France, was an officer high in command of the French troops under Rochambeau at the siege of Yorktown. He, too, like Lafayette, after he had reached home, pondered over the results of his experience and observation while in America ; and the results of his speculations, though they did not appear till long after his death, had even a greater share in determining the character of the Revolution of February, than the direct example of America had upon the events of 1789. Both revolutions, therefore, may be considered as the consequences of French speculation and theory acting upon American practice. The political and social principles, which have been eminently successful and beneficent in their operation here, have produced nothing but disaster and anarchy in France. We say that the cause of their failure in that country is, that they were foolishly exaggerated and perverted ; they were pushed to a ridiculous and pernicious excess.

When the connection between England and this country was dissolved by the Declaration of Independence, the people here did not at once abandon all their civil institutions, and fall back into a state of nature, there to begin the process of forming a government anew, commencing at the very foundations of social life. They adhered closely to their old usages and institutions, their attachment to them appearing from the very fact, that it was only the violation of these ancient forms and privileges by the government of the mother country, which produced the separation from England. The people availed themselves of their newly acquired freedom, not to

pull down their old houses and build new ones, but to restore and repair the ancient homestead. The change was the most orderly revolution that the world has ever witnessed. It was not an improvised revolt conducted by disorderly assemblages of men, suddenly throwing off a yoke which they had patiently borne for many years, and fanatically combating in defence of abstract principles, to the great value of which their own eyes were but just opened. It was not a Quixotic crusade in favor of human rights in general, nor a war undertaken only to show that all men are free and equal, and have a right to govern themselves as they see fit. It was rather the grave and deliberate act of a great country, that had grown up, in less than two centuries, as a dependency of England, and had gloried in this connection with the land of its fathers, and in the privileges which inured to its people in their character as British subjects, till the aggressions of the crown made it necessary to sever the tie, and to strike boldly in defence of those privileges and of the more general rights of humanity, to which they were at last compelled, though reluctantly, to make appeal. They fought through the whole earlier part of the struggle, not for the acquisition of new privileges, but for the preservation of old ones; not for the abstract doctrines of the equality of the human race, but for the maintenance of their charters, and of the right which they had inherited of being taxed only by their own representatives. "A long train of abuses and usurpations" compelled them at last to throw off their dependency on England, "and to provide new guards for their future security." But even then, they did nothing in hatred, haste, or malice. They say, in language which is rather pathetic than denunciatory or triumphant, "we must therefore *acquiesce in the necessity*, which denounces our separation;" and they declare "that all political connection between them and the state of Great Britain is and ought to be wholly dissolved." And this was the grand result of the American Revolution,—to dissolve *all political connection* with England, not to proclaim a new gospel of human rights; to strike out one principle of American law, not to abrogate the whole code.

So long as the first French Revolution remained under the guidance of men like Lafayette, Mirabeau, and Barnave, it conformed to the American type. Their object was to remove

the fetters which had hitherto cramped the action of society and left the body of the nation in a paralyzed state ; but to preserve the forms and institutions without which no organized assemblages of men can exist. No one could have proclaimed this truth more distinctly than did the great orator who was the soul of the movement, and the guiding spirit of the National Assembly. "We are not savages," said Mirabeau, "who have arrived here all naked from the banks of the Orinoco, to form a society. We are an old, too old a nation. We have a preëxisting government, a preëxisting king, preëxisting prejudices. These we must adjust, as we can, to the Revolution, to break the speed of the transition." His work, and that of his party was really accomplished on the memorable night of the 4th of August, when the French nation by one vigorous effort burst through the cords that had hitherto restrained it, rose from the ground, and walked the earth like a giant. The constitution that was subsequently formed, though moderate in many of its provisions, especially in giving to the king, who had then become only the chief magistrate of the people, a negative upon the enactment of injurious laws, thus arming him with the same power for the protection of the executive department which is held by the President of the United States, was faulty in giving the legislative power to a single assembly, and in many other respects was perverted by the spirit of ultraism which even then began to prevail. If the States General had simply framed the renunciations of the 4th of August into fundamental laws, and then dissolved, leaving to a subsequent legislature the task of fitting together the new and the old by such supplementary enactments as time should prove to be necessary, France might never have entered upon its long and frightful career of revolutionary excess.

But the impulse received was too great. Intoxicated by the enjoyment of its youthful liberties, and led astray by the fervid and vague declamations of those whose only idea of civil freedom was the absence of all restraint, the people broke successively through all the ties of organized society, morality, religion, and even of common humanity. Liberty came to be estimated as an idea, and not as a reality ; it was worshipped as an idol or a god, the presence of which, it was conceived, would bring blessings upon the country without

the coöperating powers of industry, economy, and associated effort. By the side of it, in the new French Pantheon, was installed the idle phantom of Equality, the existence of which as a reality is forbidden by the laws of nature and Providence. This was the novel conception which the French ingrafted upon the American system, and which was the leading cause of all their subsequent errors and crimes. Words usurped the place of things ; and all idea even of the meaning of these words was lost, when the people, so far from exercising their newly acquired freedom of action by engaging earnestly in their several pursuits, wasted their time in idle mummeries intended to celebrate their emancipation, and in wars begun for the frantic purpose of extending to their neighbors the blessings which they had not yet had opportunity to gather for themselves. Then were invented the unmeaning phrases, which have since become the slang of radicalism, and are now the watchwords of those who find in any government an intolerable restraint upon their inclinations, and seek to enjoy the benefits of society without submitting to its obligations. The importation of these phrases and of the political principles indicated by them to our own shores was the great evil and perplexity of Washington's administration. For a time, they created nearly as much mischief here as in France ; but the good sense and practical character of the majority of our people, aided by the warning voice and immense personal influence of the great man who then presided over our government, finally repudiated their extravagance, though in a modified form they still infest and corrupt the politics of our country.

The Jacobins seemed to forget that political liberty is merely a negative idea, and implies nothing but the absence of wrongful and injurious compulsion or hinderance. No benefit, therefore, can come from it directly ; it is no more a source of good than of evil. It is simply the privilege of acting either well or ill, beneficially or injuriously, as we may determine. It is just as much a curse to those who make a bad use of it, as a blessing to those who improve it by sobriety, economy, and toil ; and even then, the prosperity which the nation enjoys is not the consequence of its freedom, but of the exertions which it was free to make. These truths are so obvious and palpable, that they must be regarded as mere

truisms, which one is ashamed to repeat ; but they show the absurdity of that worship of liberty, which began in France, and has been ever since one of the chief causes of the lamentable failure of every trial of free institutions in that country. Equality of political rights is possible, but for a government to enforce equality of social condition would be mere tyranny ; since this would be to deny to the governed the free exercise of those faculties with which they are endowed in very different degrees by nature. "The liberty of all," says Mirabeau, "knows no other limit than the liberty of each ;" and the liberty of each is certainly infringed by any regulation which inhibits the full use and enjoyment of his faculties, and of the property and influence, the comforts and luxuries, which he may obtain by them. To declare that all men shall be equal in their capacities and conditions is therefore just as absurd as to decree that they all be of the same height and of equal weight. Human legislation cannot abrogate the decrees of nature, nor remove the inequalities which belong to the physical constitution of man. Yet the vain pursuit of these phantoms of absolute liberty and perfect equality was the only foundation of Lamartine's extravagant remark, that "the French Revolution was the only practical attempt a nation ever made to realize the doctrines of Christianity."

The Revolution of 1789 actually accomplished one great and permanent good for the people of France. By the law regulating the descent of property, which ordained the equal distribution of the estates of persons deceased among their natural heirs, a law which was intended to break the power of a feudal aristocracy, it struck a death-blow against the monstrous inequality of wealth, which is the great evil of modern civilization. This law, also, may be said to have been borrowed from the example of this country, where the right of primogeniture, except for a short time in Virginia, has never existed. But the French law, as usual, exaggerated the features of its American prototype, by limiting the power of making a will. Here, it is only the property of intestates which is distributed equally ; by testament, a person may divide his estate as unequally as he pleases, and may even disinherit all his natural heirs. In France, the law passed by the republic, which was subsequently incorporated as to all its essential features into Napoleon's code, allows the testator

to dispose as he pleases of only a fraction of his property ; the bulk of it must descend in equal proportions to the nearest of kin. We shall not undertake to decide upon the comparative merits of the two systems ; it is enough to say that where the right of primogeniture and perpetual entail has never existed, and where, consequently, riches have always been very equally distributed, the American law is perhaps sufficient to prevent the future undue aggregation of wealth in the hands of a few ; while a law as stringent as that which now obtains in France is necessary to correct so monstrous an evil as that which the long continued policy of the legislature has fostered in the social condition of England. During the last sixty years, the condition of the laboring classes in France, under the beneficial operation of this law, has been constantly improving ; while the unhappy lot of their brethren across the Channel has been growing worse from day to day, and no amelioration of it now seems possible except through one of those awful convulsions which reform society by first plunging it into anarchy and ruin.

But we have considered this subject recently at so much length, that it is not necessary to recur to it now, except for the purpose of calling to mind those circumstances in the condition of the French people which show that a social revolution among them was wholly unprovoked and uncalled for. Two-thirds of the nation are owners of land, or constitute the families of the landowners ; while but one-eighteenth of the whole are agricultural laborers who depend entirely upon wages. Two-thirds of the civic population, also, are owners of property in the public funds or in trade ; and wages which are the sole resource of the remaining third, have been steadily increasing, in their ratio to the price of food, ever since the opening of the present century. Travellers, statisticians, and political economists, both English and French, all declare with one voice, that pauperism was rapidly diminishing in France, that the working classes of the urban population were better fed, better clothed, and better lodged than they were twenty or thirty years ago, and that, in the condition of the peasantry, there was very little to be desired. Mr. Inglis is "inclined to assert that, upon the whole, the French peasantry are the happiest of any country in Europe." Mr. M'Culloch says, "there are considerable differences in the

condition and habits of the work-people in the different manufacturing towns ; but on the whole, they are, both physically and morally, vastly improved."*

Pauperism and misery unquestionably exist in France ; they are almost coextensive with intemperance, ignorance, and vice. In a large and dissolute capital, like Paris, they abound to an extent which compromises its peace and endangers its safety. But the government and the laws are hardly more responsible for their existence than for the prevalence of an epidemic disease. Indirectly the law may operate for the prevention and cure of the moral, as well as the physical, disease. It may multiply the means of instruction, establish hospitals for the sick, retreats for the aged and infirm, and prisons for the dishonest and vicious. It may stimulate the working classes to order, industry, and economy, and in seasons of unusual scarcity may provide extraordinary aid. It did so in 1847, which was a memorable year throughout Europe for the high price of food, owing to the failure of the crops ; the average price of bread, which in 1846 was but eight sous the kilogramme, rose to thirteen sous ; and for all who were necessitous, the authorities of the city undertook to pay the difference between these two sums. In this manner, M. Dupin tells us, they relieved about four hundred thousand persons, including, of course, many who were not in real want, for no very rigid inquiry was made into the circumstances of the applicants. The number certainly appears excessive, for according to the calculations of the chief of the police, the number of work-people who depend upon wages alone in Paris, including women and children, is but two hundred and fifty thousand, or one-fourth of the whole population ; and of these, in ordinary years, only one-eighth, or a little over thirty thousand, are so indigent as to need charity. This is not an alarming number for a population of a million, especially when we consider that in England, taking town and country together, one person out of every twelve is a public pauper. In Paris, the proportion is but one in thirty ; this number, however, does not include the sick in the hospitals, all of whom are supported at the public charge.

* See the authorities cited in the *N. A. Review* for July, 1848, and the *Revue des deux Mondes*, Vol. XXIII. pp. 822, 823.

Is it possible for the French government to do more for the relief of poverty and suffering than it attempted under Louis Philippe's reign? Louis Blanc maintains that it can; that it is bound to adopt measures which shall raise the proletaries, who form but one-fourth of the population of Paris, and one-sixth of that of all France, to a level in point of comfort and enjoyment with the owners of property. Proudhon, his more zealous coadjutor, advocates an absolute equality of goods. Property, he says, is theft; it consists only of stolen goods. All men are equal; they have equal rights and equal obligations, and the earth with all that it contains is for their equal benefit. He who takes a larger share than his neighbor defrauds that neighbor, and must be compelled to restore what does not belong to him. It was to carry into effect such doctrines as these that the Revolution of February was made; unlike its formidable predecessor, it was a transfer of the power of government from the many to the few. At the best, it was a revolt of six millions against thirty millions; for these are the respective numbers of the proletaries and the owners of property in France. In reality, it was a usurpation of the government by two hundred and fifty thousand of the working men, the populace of Paris. They were less numerous than were the nobility and clergy before 1789; and if they had succeeded in the revolt of June, as they did in that of February, the tyranny they would have established would have been more oppressive and hateful than that which was destroyed on the night of the 4th of August.

The Provisional Government, which appointed itself to office after the successful revolt, lost no time in attempting to carry the theories of these persons into effect. One of the earliest decrees that it issued was the following:—"The Government of the French Republic engages to guarantee the subsistence of the laborer by his labor. It engages to guarantee work to all citizens. It recognizes the right of workmen to combine for the purpose of enjoying the lawful proceeds of their labor. The Provisional Government restores to the laboring class, to whom it belongs, the million of the Civil List now due." Another ordinance converted the palace of the Tuileries into an asylum for invalid laborers; and a third declared that "all objects pledged at the Mont-de-Piété [the general pawnbroking establishment,] consisting of linen,

clothes, and other small articles, on which not more than ten francs have been lent, shall be restored to the parties to whom they belong. The Minister of Finance is to provide for the expense which this decree will occasion." Discount offices were also established for the purpose of making loans to mechanics and small tradesmen; and as these were intended for persons who could not obtain credit at the ordinary banks, it was easy to see that most of its loans would in fact be gifts. Three days after the Revolution, it was also announced, that important public works would be organized at different places, and all laborers wishing to take part in them might apply to the mayors of Paris, who would give them directions. Thousands did apply, and were employed in shovelling the earth from one part of the Champ de Mai to another, undoing some work that had been done under similar circumstances by the former Republic. The period of labor was fixed by another decree at ten hours a day for Paris, and eleven hours for the provinces; and a government commission, under the presidency of Louis Blanc and Albert, was installed at the Luxembourg, for the purpose of studying the condition of those who were dependent on wages, and ameliorating their lot. This commission established the famous national workshops, where two francs a day were paid by the government to all who were immediately engaged, and one franc to those who were waiting for admission. These sums being considerably less than the wages of ordinary labor at Paris, which vary from three to four francs, it was expected that those only would enter who could not obtain employment elsewhere. But as all labor was paid alike at these national establishments, the indolent and the unskilful sharing equally with the industrious and the expert, and as, in fact, it was optional with those who entered whether they would labor at all, it was soon found that the workmen preferred two francs a day for doing nothing to four francs for their ordinary toil. They lived more frugally, and were able to spend their whole time in discussing politics, attending the clubs, and devising means to compel the government to raise their wages.

The rapid increase and consequent enormous expense of these establishments soon convinced the government of the fatal error which it had committed in beginning the experiment. "The army of observation encamped on the borders

of Parisian industry," says M. Dupin, "which included on the 15th of March only 5000 workmen, counted nearly 30,000 at the end of the month, more than 64,000 on the 15th of April, more than 100,000 on the 1st of May, and thirty days afterwards had risen to 117,000. This great army of idleness then cost the state more than a million of francs a week. In spite of this immense extension, it was so far from including all who then, in Paris, were in need of work, that there were 200,000 necessitous persons deprived of the means of gaining their livelihood; they were dying of famine, thanks to the inventions of the organizers of labor. These unfortunate persons were besieging the mayoralty for permission to enter the already overflowing battalions at the national workshops." The laborers from the country, allured by the prospect of pay without work, flocked to the capital to share the good fortune of their brethren, and caused this fearful augmentation of their number. The government was then obliged to pause in its frantic experiment; several bands of laborers were turned back to their homes in the provinces; and the indications that the national workshops were soon to be abolished caused the terrible insurrection of June.

The theories of the revolutionists of February respecting the proper organization of society and the distribution of property having thus been refuted by startling experiments, it seems almost a waste of words to argue against them. But these men have made many proselytes among the working classes in France, who were easily persuaded to accept doctrines apparently so favorable to their own interests; and the conviction that there would be no peace for the country till these deluded persons were reclaimed from their errors, and brought back to their former habits of quiet industry, caused the government to make that appeal to the Institute which has been answered by the publication of these tracts. We are rather disappointed in the tracts themselves; they are written with a good deal of earnestness, and are sufficiently elementary in their character. But in popular qualities of style, and in power of argument and richness of illustration, most of them are inferior to the pestilent writings which they are designed to confute. M. Thiers writes, as usual, with much vivacity and point; but his reasoning shows the truth of his own remark, that it is hard to demonstrate what is self-

evident ; it is meagre, abstract, and little adapted to sway the opinions of the multitude.

Much the ablest confutation of Socialism and Communism that we have seen, among the multitude of them that have been published at Paris, was written by Marshal Bugeaud, for the *Revue des deux Mondes*. It is marked by the blunt conciseness and energy of one who is accustomed to military command, and is very clear, pungent, and effective. In point of good sense, laconism, and force of reasoning, it would do honor to the Duke of Wellington. It was written at an early day, before the insurrection of June had so far demonstrated the folly of the Provisional Government that it was no longer an act of moral courage to assail their conduct and principles. We are not surprised, after reading it, that the Marshal was the favorite candidate of a few judicious conservatives at Paris for the post of President of the Republic. We translate from this excellent article an interesting account of an experiment of communism which the writer made while he was governor of Algeria.

“ Wishing to make a trial of military colonization, that I might support by facts some propositions which I had to offer to the government, I founded in the vicinity of Algiers, in 1842, three villages of soldiers. One of them, Fouka, was composed of men who had served out their time ; the two others, Mered and Mahelma, of those who still owed the state three years of service. I subjected the colonists to labor in common ; this was the more practicable, in my opinion, because, as they still drew their rations and pay, they would attribute less importance to the proceeds of their industry. These proceeds were to form a common fund, destined, at the end of three years, to defray the expenses of marriage, and to procure for them all, *after a uniform pattern*, house furniture and agricultural tools.

“ At this time, I knew very well what were the difficulties in the way of the association of laborers ; my agricultural experience had revealed them to me ; but I hoped that discipline and the habits of military life, which forms a sort of community, would dissipate, or at least would diminish, these inconveniences. ‘ You are comrades and brothers,’ I said to the colonists ; ‘ for a twofold reason, therefore, you would suffer, if, at the time favorable for marriage, some of you should not have the means of establishing yourselves on account of sickness or some other accident.’ I remarked that they received this proposition [of working in common] very coldly, and that, in fact, they accepted it only from deference and discipline.

"I caused a division of the land to be made in order to excite emulation through the love of property, and each colonist had permission to work one day in the week on his own land. During the first year, there was zeal enough; but few complaints were made to me *against the idle*. It is true, that I kept up their ardor and contentment by frequently sending them flocks which we had brought away in our *razzias* among the Arabs. These flocks formed the greater part of the common fund, and one had no better claim to them than another, as they were not the result of labor.

"On my return from a long expedition, I went to visit my three little colonies, beginning with that of Mered. It was at the end of September, 1843. Usually I was received with joy by the military colonists, who considered me as their benefactor, and called me their father. This time, it was on Sunday, I found them gloomy and almost rude. They stood leaning against the door, and did not crowd around me as they were wont to do. I saw that there was something unusual on their minds. I sent for their commander, and as he was absent, I applied to the sergeant-major, to know the cause of the dejection, the signs of which were so obvious. 'My men have good cause to be gloomy,' answered the sergeant; 'they are losing the greater part of their harvest; they attribute this loss to laboring in common; they want no more of it, and they now ask you to break up their association.' — 'But how is it that they are losing their harvest? They reaped their crop in the early part of June, and it is now the end of September; the grain ought to have been in the barn long ago.' — 'You are right, governor, it ought to be so. But labor has been neglected, and we have not yet threshed a third part of the barley or the wheat. Relying upon the usual continuance of fine weather, we had not taken the precaution to remove the sheaves from the ricks perpendicularly, but have taken what formed the covering of the whole oblong surface. The two rain-storms that have lately fallen have soaked our sheaves, and the grain has all sprouted.'

"I went to the sheaves, and found that they had germinated on all sides. I immediately called the colonists together; they formed a circle around me, and we had the following dialogue. 'How happens it, my friends, that having reaped in June, you have not yet threshed the grain at the end of September?' — 'The reason is,' they answered me, 'that we have not been at work.' — 'And why have you not worked?' — 'Because we all relied upon each other; because no one was willing to do more than another; and thus we have all reduced ourselves to *an equality with the lazy ones*. You may well believe, governor, that if each one of us had owned his share of the grain, it would

all have been threshed long ago. We should by this time have done more than twice as much. It cannot go on so any longer; we entreat you to break up our community.' — 'Yes! yes!' cried all the colonists, even the most indolent. These words, 'an equality with the lazy ones,' had made so much impression upon me, that I had already determined to give up the plan of laboring in common; but thinking that I ought not to yield too quickly, I appealed to their feelings of fraternity, the strength of which was well known to me. 'How is this, my friends?' I replied; 'you are all comrades of the same regiment, (the 48th); you have chosen each other of your own accord; you are all young and strong; you form, as it were, a family of brothers; and yet you do not know how to live together and work for the common good, without calculating whether one does more than another.' — 'Governor, we love each other very much; and in spite of that, we do not feel any emulation in labor. It does not seem as if we were working for ourselves when we are working for a common stock. It will be much worse when we are married; for our wives will agree with each other much less than we do in regard to labor and the common stock. It will be a perfect hell. If we prove to you that we have produced more in the one day out of the week that you have granted to each one to labor for himself than in the five days of community, you will not refuse to break up our association.'

"I proceeded immediately to verify this fact. I obtained successively the amount of each of the sixty-seven individual harvests; the officers wrote down my valuation of them, and on adding them together, the sum was actually found to exceed by one-fifth the total harvest of the community. This operation being finished, I assembled the colonists anew. I informed them that the results of this inquiry had determined me to establish individual labor among them; but I warned them, that as they thought they were capable of providing each one for himself, I should deprive them of their rations and pay. They received this declaration with an unanimous assent.

"Mered had taken up my whole day. On the morrow, I visited Mahelma and Fouka. I found there the same repugnance for labor in common. They expressed it to me in the same terms, alleging the same reasons. Yet this agreement could not have been concerted; the villages, six leagues distant from each other, had no communication together. I deputed an overseer to distribute the common stock and the flocks as equitably as he could, and the association was broken up. Immediately great emulation sprung up among most of them, and at the close of 1845, these three villages were far the most prosperous in Sahel. Only there were great inequalities in this

prosperity. M. Petrus Borel, inspector of colonization, stated in a report, that the colonists of Mered had five or six thousand francs' worth of cattle of all sorts, while the others had not even preserved those which had been allotted to them, and their harvests were not large enough to support them. This is in the nature of things ; absolute equality is not of this world ; God himself has willed it so, since he creates men so unlike in strength, in intellect, in activity, in their inclinations. The socialists, afflicted by the frequent sight of misery by the side of competence, and even of wealth, pursue the chimera of perfect equality. They think they have found it in association, but they deceive themselves ; they will obtain only an equality of misery."

This extract is a long one, but we must borrow one other passage, to show that the Marshal reasons in the same vigorous, straightforward, and sensible manner in which he acts.

"The philanthropic dreamers, the demagogues of every age and every country, have seemed to believe that there existed somewhere a great amount of riches given by God, which might suffice for all the world, if a few aristocrats had not, with merciless selfishness, obtained possession of them. This idea is, unwittingly perhaps, the basis of all their systems, all their declamations. Otherwise, what would signify this eternal assertion, that the Revolution of February was not political, but social ? Or what would mean that other axiom of the social catechism, that wealth is *ill distributed* ? We see clearly, behind these propositions, the idea that there is *natural* wealth, existing before labor, which belongs to all, and which, if badly distributed, justifies a social revolution. If it is demonstrated that this primeval wealth, given by God, does not exist, that there are no other riches than those which are created by labor, (and the demonstration is a very easy one,) what becomes of the doctrine of the social revolution, whence they wished to obtain a better distribution of goods ? This new division of property is nothing but a theft committed upon labor, intelligence, and economy ; it is the work of the hornet pillaging the hive of the industrious bee. If we were willing to imitate the violence of certain political writers, should we not be justified in turning back upon them the epithet which they have applied to holders of property ?

"It is matter of astonishment that all eyes are not struck by the truth written, as it were, over the whole surface of the soil, — that there are ~~no~~ riches but those which are produced by the industry of every day, of every year ; that the riches already produced, the fruit of labor also, are almost infinitely small in com-

parison with the wants of a society of thirty-six millions of souls ; that even if they should be taken from those who have them to be distributed to those who have nothing, or but a little, the condition of the latter would not be ameliorated ; far from that, they would be impoverished. The land alone, being created by God, might appear, at first sight, as wealth existing previously to labor, and belonging to all the world. This idea was true at the moment of creation, except that the land is not, in itself, wealth in the proper acceptation of the word ; it is only a vast arena for the labor of civilized man. In its primitive state, it can support only a few savages upon the fruits and roots of the forests. The value which it now has is what labor has given to it. How many ages, how much capital, how much toil, had to be buried in its bosom to produce that which we now see ! . . . The most experienced agriculturists say that ‘ the land is nothing but a matrix, a mould, or an instrument of labor. If we were to calculate all that landed estates have cost to bring them into cultivation, not ever since man has labored upon them, but during only the last two centuries, we should find that the sum was much greater than the present value of those estates.’ We refer now only to the extraordinary costs, such as those of clearing the ground, draining the marshes, carrying off the rocks and stones, transporting soil and mineral manures, planting trees and vines, building farm-houses, and furnishing cattle and the implements of husbandry. We must leave out the expense of the ordinary annual cultivation of the ground, as that is repaid by the crops.

“ I will ask the men who have the incredible audacity to declare that property is robbery, if the ordinary laborer’s wages for the week or the month are not sacred. They will answer, that certainly there is nothing more sacred in the world. Very well ! The labor of months, of years, of centuries, which has made property what it is, — is not this as sacred as the labor of a week or a month ? Cease your blasphemies, then, against property ; instead of saying that the first person who enclosed a field and cleared it for cultivation was a fool or a rogue, bless him, honor him, respect his work ; for without it the human race would have perished, or, thinly scattered over the earth, would have lived in want and misery.

“ I think I have already demonstrated that there is no such thing as primitive wealth, existing antecedently to labor, since the land itself has become an article of wealth only under the active hand of man. It is equally true, that the wealth already created is nothing ; that alone which the labor of every day and every year is constantly creating is of great importance.

“ The principal articles of the wealth of a nation are, first, the products of the earth, which constitute the food of man and the

raw material for his clothing ; and secondly, the manufactured articles in which he is dressed, and which give him the conveniences and comforts of life.

“Now, are there any aristocrats who hold in their hands the hundred and forty millions of hectolitres of different sorts of grain, and the forty millions of hectolitres of wine, wool, hemp, flax, meat, oil, &c., which France must produce and consume in 1849 ? Are there other aristocrats who own the household furniture, the tools, and materials, which are consumed in a single year ? No ; these must be produced by the incessant labor of all, or nearly all, persons in France. If their labor should cease only for a few months, the people would be naked and would die of famine ; for they have not a stock of wealth on hand large enough to keep them in supply during this respite.

“Suppose that we should dispense with this incessant toil. Should we ameliorate our condition by dividing among ourselves the wealth already created, — that is to say, the land, the houses, the money, all the possessions of those who are called the rich ? Let us see.

“How numerous are these rich persons, against whom they are so imprudently trying to kindle the anger of the people ? Your old electoral law can tell you ; you had two hundred and twenty thousand electors paying annually not less than two hundred francs of direct taxes. The property represented by this amount of taxation is often loaded with mortgages for a great part of its value ; at any rate, it supports a numerous family, and out of these two hundred and twenty thousand there would be at the utmost, not more than sixty thousand families who would have luxuries and superfluities at command. But no matter ; let us consider the whole two hundred and twenty thousand as rich ; and instead of robbing them gradually of their wealth, as certain economists propose, either by progressive taxation, or by extraordinary imposts laid upon them alone, or by progressive rights of inheritance, let us take from them at once all that they possess, and distribute the spoils among the thirty-four millions who have nothing, or but very little, and who live almost entirely by their daily labor. How large would be each man’s share ? A trifling sum, that would not enable him to do without a day’s or an hour’s labor. Would their situation be ameliorated ? I affirm that it would be made worse. For these two hundred and twenty thousand *rich* persons, whom they will deprive of their property, — who were they ? The directors, the multipliers, of labor. The capital with which they supported industry, being now distributed through the whole community, will no longer be able to create labor. It will be like a lever cut up into many short sticks ; it will no longer raise the weight. Society, deprived of the intelli-

gence of these men, the directors of labor, and of what is the great motive power of industry, concentrated capital, would fall into an atrophy ; it would sink to a worse condition than that of the Arabs, who at least have space enough, so that they can raise up numerous flocks and herds. This is what would be gained by the ruin of that middling class, against whom the demagogues are trying to exasperate the ordinary laborers, instead of making them understand, that there is between them and the middling classes a perfect community of interests and reciprocity of services ; that the middling class is not a privileged caste, but only a portion of the laboring people who have risen by their industry ; that working men are every day rising into this higher class, place being made for them by those who, through the vicissitudes of commerce and industry, fall back every day into the lower class whence they came. This is the natural and providential movement of society ; for it is the desire of rising into the ranks of the middle classes, and remaining there, which creates the emulation that is the life of society.

“ And if, which Heaven forbid, the socialists should succeed in reducing the whole people to a level, which could only be that of misery, is it to be supposed that this equality would continue long ? No ; the force of circumstances would concentrate capital anew in the hands of the most active and the most intelligent ; and again, for the good of all, we should have directors of industry. *The bulk of mankind require to be led.*”

If the opinions and the theories to which we have attributed the lamentable failure of this last trial of republicanism in France existed in that country alone, we might seem to have devoted too much space to their discussion. But they have found preachers and proselytes on this side of the Atlantic also, and the Socialism of the latter revolution threatens to create almost as much mischief here as did the Jacobinism of the former one. We have no fears, indeed, of the prevalence among our people of these doctrines in their most exaggerated and pernicious form ; in France alone could absurdities so manifest obtain any hold upon the public mind. But in every community, there is a secret feeling of bitterness rankling in the breasts of the poor against the rich, which is with difficulty kept down by the effects of education and moral and religious principle, and which, in times of great political excitement, becomes exasperated and menacing. Demagogues and theorists know too well how to strike this sensitive chord even in peaceful and prosperous days ; and

where the whole power is lodged in the hands of the multitude, they may endanger the organization of society itself by their insidious action, before any general alarm is excited. The revolution of February certainly took the upper and middling classes in France by surprise ; and they soon found that even their great numerical superiority afforded them little protection against the exasperated populace. It is unsafe even in America to allow the doctrines of the socialists to be preached to the people without supplying an antidote to the poison. The *flour riot*, which took place in New York some twelve years ago, and the Anti-rent war, which more recently disgraced that State, were significant warnings. The great truths of political economy and civil polity ought to be explained to the people with some higher purpose than the hope of affecting the party politics of the hour. The educated and reflecting portion of our community ought not to wait, as the members of the French Academy did, till they are reminded, by the thunder of the cannon directed against the barricades, and by the earnest appeal of the constituted authorities of the State, that they also have a work to do for the preservation of society and the interests of truth.

ART. II. — *A Second Visit to the United States of North America.* By SIR CHARLES LYELL, F. R. S., President of the Geological Society of London, &c. New York : Harpers. 1849. 2 vols. 12mo.

SIR CHARLES LYELL is a shrewd and thoughtful observer, whose grave and unimpassioned comments on what he saw and heard in America are likely to be equally entertaining and instructive to readers on both sides of the ocean. His book is a very amusing *mélange* of observations on geology and men and manners in the United States ; he speculates with about equal success on the various formations of rock and the different strata of society, taking rather a deeper interest, we suspect, in the former than the latter, but expatiating upon both in a very sensible and judicious manner, and